

Zambia

If you're out to experience the 'real' Africa, Zambia is that diamond in the rough. The country boasts some of the continent's best wildlife parks, and shares (with Zimbabwe) some of the region's major highlights: Victoria Falls, Lake Kariba and Lower Zambezi National Park. It is also an angler's dream, as fishermen hail from all over the world to try their luck on the mighty Zambezi River with the hopes of landing a toothy tigerfish or the rare, giant vundu. Avid birders also flock to Zambia to glimpse its fabulous diversity of birds, most notably Chaplin's barbets.

For independent travellers Zambia can be a challenge: distances between major towns and attractions are large, and getting around by car or public transport takes time and patience. But for many, this challenge is part of Zambia's appeal. Save Lusaka and Livingstone, this is the 'real' Africa, so rare among the increasingly developed and Westernised parts of the region.

So if you like your travel easy and your wilderness neatly bundled into a homogenised and Westernised version of 'Africa', then much of Zambia may not appeal. But if you enjoy a raw edge and an Africa with few tourists, Zambia is the place you're looking for.

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 752,614 sq km
- **ATMs** Only in main cities
- **Borders** Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia
- **Budget** US\$20 to US\$30 per day
- **Capital** Lusaka
- **Languages** English, Bemba, Lozi, Nyanja and Tonga
- **Money** Kwacha; US\$1 = 4200ZMK
- **Population** 11.5 million
- **Seasons** cool & dry (May to August), hot & dry (September to November), hot & wet (December to April)
- **Telephone** country code  260; international access code  00
- **Time** GMT/UTC + 2
- **Visa** US\$25 for 90 days, issued at point of entry



HIGHLIGHTS

- **South Luangwa National Park** (p1060) Soak up the wildlife and bush in one of the most majestic parks in Africa.
- **Lower Zambezi National Park** (p1064) Gaze in awe at elephants strolling along the bank, teeming hippos in the river, and fish eagles soaring overhead, while canoeing or fishing on the river.
- **Lake Kariba** (p1064) Boat or fish, or just sunbathe at a resort along one of the world's largest artificial lakes.
- **Victoria Falls** (p1064) Gaze at the magnificent, thundering waters; then get your adrenaline fix with a dare devil-activity in the Batoka Gorge below.
- **Off the beaten track** (p1062) Head for the wilderness of Northern Zambia to discover hidden waterfalls and serene lakes, with scarcely another soul in sight.

CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

There are three seasons: the dry season (mid-April to August), when temperatures drop at night, but the landscape is green and lush; the hot season (September to mid-November), the best time to see wildlife as flora is sparse; and, the wet season (mid-November to mid-April), ideal for bird-watching.

ITINERARIES

- **One Week** With only one week, hit one of the major attractions of southern Africa: Victoria Falls (p1064) or South Luangwa National Park (p1060).

HOW MUCH?

- **Small wood carving** US\$15
- **Soapstone ashtray** US\$12
- **Waste basket made of beer caps** US\$8
- **T-shirt** US\$10
- **Batik** US\$11

LONELY PLANET INDEX

- **1L petrol** US\$1.80
- **1L bottle of water** US\$3
- **Bottle of Mosi lager** US\$1.80
- **Souvenir T-shirt** US\$15
- **Street snack** US\$2

- **Two Weeks** You will have time for the great Victoria Falls (p1064) as well as one or two of the national parks – probably South Luangwa (p1060) or Lower Zambezi (p1064).

- **Three Weeks** With extra time and money, go to Victoria Falls (p1064), South Luangwa National Park (p1060), a lodge on the Lower Zambezi (p1064) and the Copperbelt province (p1063). If you are travelling to/from Tanzania or Malawi, or have even more time up your sleeve, you can explore Northern Zambia (p1062), including the Kalambo Falls (p1062) and Shiwa Ng'andu (p1062).

HISTORY

Zambia was originally inhabited by hunter-gatherer Khoisan people. About 2000 years ago Bantu people migrated from the Congo basin and gradually displaced them. From the 14th century more immigrants came from the Congo, and by the 16th century various dispersed groups consolidated into powerful tribes or nations, with specific territories and dynastic rulers.

The first Europeans to arrive were Portuguese explorers, following routes established many centuries earlier by Swahili-Arab slave-traders. The celebrated British explorer David Livingstone travelled up the Zambezi in the early 1850s in search of a route to the interior of Africa. In 1855, he reached the awesome waterfall that he promptly named Victoria Falls.

Livingstone's work and writings inspired missionaries to come to the area north of the Zambezi; close on their heels came explorers, hunters and prospectors searching for whatever riches the country had to offer. In 1890 the area became known as Northern Rhodesia and was administered by the British South Africa Company, owned by empire-builder Cecil John Rhodes.

At around the same time, vast deposits of copper were discovered in the area now called the Copperbelt. The indigenous people had mined there for centuries, however now large European-style opencast pits were being dug. The main sources of labour were the Africans who had to earn money to pay the new 'hut tax'; in any case, most were driven from their land by the European settlers. In 1924 the colony was brought under direct British control.

Nationalist Resistance

Meanwhile, African nationalism was becoming a more dominant force in the region. The United National Independence Party (UNIP) was founded in the late 1950s by Dr Kenneth Kaunda, who spoke out against the federation. Northern Rhodesia became independent in 1964, changing its name to Zambia. Kaunda became President and remained so for the next 27 years, largely because in 1972 he declared UNIP the only legal party and himself the sole presidential candidate.

Over the years, however, government corruption and mismanagement, coupled with civil wars in neighbouring states, left Zambia's economy in dire straits, and violent street protests were quickly transformed into a general demand for multiparty politics. Full elections were held in October 1991, and Kaunda and UNIP were resoundingly defeated by Frederick Chiluba and the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). Kaunda bowed out gracefully, and Chiluba became president.

With backing from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, financial controls were liberalised to attract investors. But austerity measures were also introduced – and these were tough for the average Zambian. Food prices soared, inflation was rampant and state industries were privatised or simply closed, leaving many thousands of people out of work.

By the mid-1990s, the lack of visible change gave Kaunda the confidence to re-enter the political arena. He attracted strong support but withdrew from the November 1996 elections in protest at MMD irregularities. Chiluba won a landslide victory and remained in firm control – sometimes too firm. There was much speculation that the elections were rigged. However, most Zambians accepted the result, in the hope that at least the country would remain peaceful.

Zambia Today

The political shenanigans continued unabated at the start of the new millennium: in mid-2001, Vice-President Christon Tembo was expelled from parliament by Chiluba, so he formed an opposition party: the Forum for Democratic Development (FDD).

Although Chiluba tried to amend the constitution to enable himself to run for a third term, he was unsuccessful. In 2001 Levy Mwanawasa, the new MMD leader, was elected

Zambia's third president. Mwanawasa has set a strong precedent during the first half of the decade by supporting an investigation into alleged charges of corruption and misappropriation of funds against Chiluba. The former president is rumoured to have squirreled away millions in overseas bank accounts.

Because Zambia was deemed a Heavily Indebted Poor Country, most of its US\$7 billion international debt was eliminated in 2005. However, the country still suffers from high unemployment, a rapid population growth rate, a tragic HIV/AIDS pandemic, and an ineffectual government. Mwanawasa was elected to a second, five-year term in September 2006.

CULTURE

On the day-to-day level, the biggest issues on the table for most Zambians are high unemployment and the HIV pandemic, as the urban prevalence of the disease might be as high as 35%. HIV/AIDS has had an unexpected effect on the population including a new population of 'street kids', who live in roadside sewers and on middle-of-the-road dividers in urban centres. There are also funeral processions on a daily basis as the disease has claimed enough lives to lower the average life expectancy to under 33 years. The population density is about 15 people per sq km, making Zambia one of the most thinly populated countries in Africa. But since almost 45% of Zambians live in urban centres, compounds designed for 50,000 now house over 150,000.

A social issue often discussed on the radio is cohabitation rather than marriage. The argument is that many Zambians feel that this will rock the foundations of their traditional values and therefore be the beginning of the end of society. Finally, soccer is always a topic on the minds of Zambians, whether it be domestic, within Africa, or the premiership or World Cup.

PEOPLE

Tribal groups are (in order of size) the Bemba, the Tonga, the Nyanja, the Ngoni, and the Lozi. While most descendants of the original white settlers have since moved away, one can still find a fair few, mostly farmers and business types. Indians and Pakistanis have long been a part of the mix, so don't be surprised to hear them proudly call themselves Zambians.

The majority of Zambians are Christians (75%), though others are Muslims and Hindus (24%) or animists (1%).

ARTS & CRAFTS

Zambia has a thriving contemporary art scene. One of the country's most famous and respected painters is the late Henry Tayali whose works have enjoyed a popular following among ordinary folk, and have inspired many other Zambian painters.

Other internationally recognised artists include Agnes Yombwe, who works with purely natural materials and uses traditional ceramics and textile designs in her striking sculptures.

Zambian artistry includes skilfully woven baskets from Barotseland (Western Province) and Siavonga, malachite jewellery from the north, and woodcarvings and soapstone sculptures from Mukuni village near Livingstone.

All of Zambia's tribal groups have their own musical traditions. The Lozi are famous for the large drums played during the remarkable Ku'omboka ceremony (described on p1068), and the Bemba are also renowned drummers.

The most notable traditional dance is the *makishi*, which features male dancers wearing masks of stylised human faces, grass skirts and anklets.

Contemporary musicians who have achieved some international fame include Larry Maluma and Ricki Ilonga, both exponents of a traditional style called *kalindula* (a rumba-inspired sound).

ENVIRONMENT

Landlocked Zambia is one of Africa's most eccentric legacies of colonialism. Shaped like a contorted figure of eight, its borders do not correspond to any tribal or linguistic area.

The diversity of animal species in Zambia is huge. The rivers support large populations of hippos and crocs, and the associated grasslands provide plenty of fodder for herds of zebra, impala and puku (antelopes common in Zambia, but not elsewhere). The pukus naturally attract predators, so most parks contain lions, leopards, hyenas and cheetahs. The other two big drawcards – buffaloes and elephants – are also found in huge herds in the main national parks. Bird-lovers can go crazy in Zambia, where about 750 species have been recorded.

Zambia boasts 19 national parks and reserves, and 34 game-management areas (GMAs). After decades of poaching, clearing and generally bad management, many are difficult to reach and others don't contain much wildlife. Since 1990, however, with the help of international donors, several of Zambia's parks have been rehabilitated and the wildlife protected by projects that also aim to give local people some benefit from conservation measures. Zambia's parks are well known for walking safaris, and some, particularly South Luangwa, have a great diversity of wildlife.

FOOD & DRINK

The national dish is unquestionably *nshima*, a bland but filling maize porridge-like substance. It's eaten with your hands and always accompanied by a 'relish', such as beans or vegetables (in inexpensive eateries), or chicken or fish (in slightly better restaurants). If you like lagers, the local beer, Mosi, is good. Traditional 'opaque' beer made from maize is sold commercially in cardboard cartons, but make sure you shake the carton before drinking.

LUSAKA

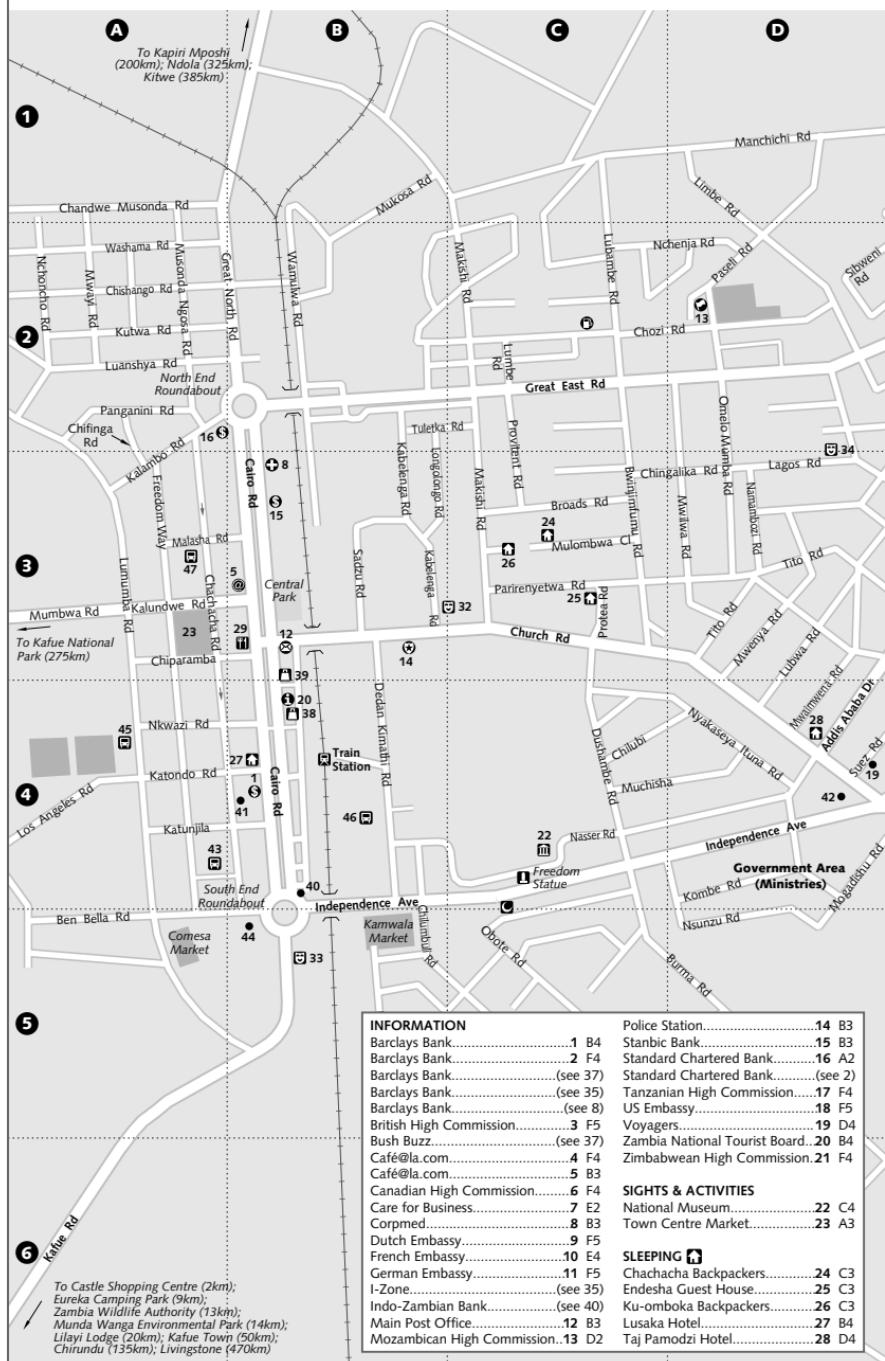
01 / pop 1.2 million

The capital of Zambia is a small city, part modern and part traditional African, where dusty markets sit alongside Soviet-looking high-rise blocks. Although Zambia is a fascinating country, Lusaka will never be a highlight for tourists. There are few notable buildings, monuments or other sights, but it does boast a lively ambience and genuine African feel. The markets are good, there's a decent arts scene and the nightclubs throb at weekends. If you have to be in Lusaka for a few days you'll have no trouble passing the time pleasantly enough.

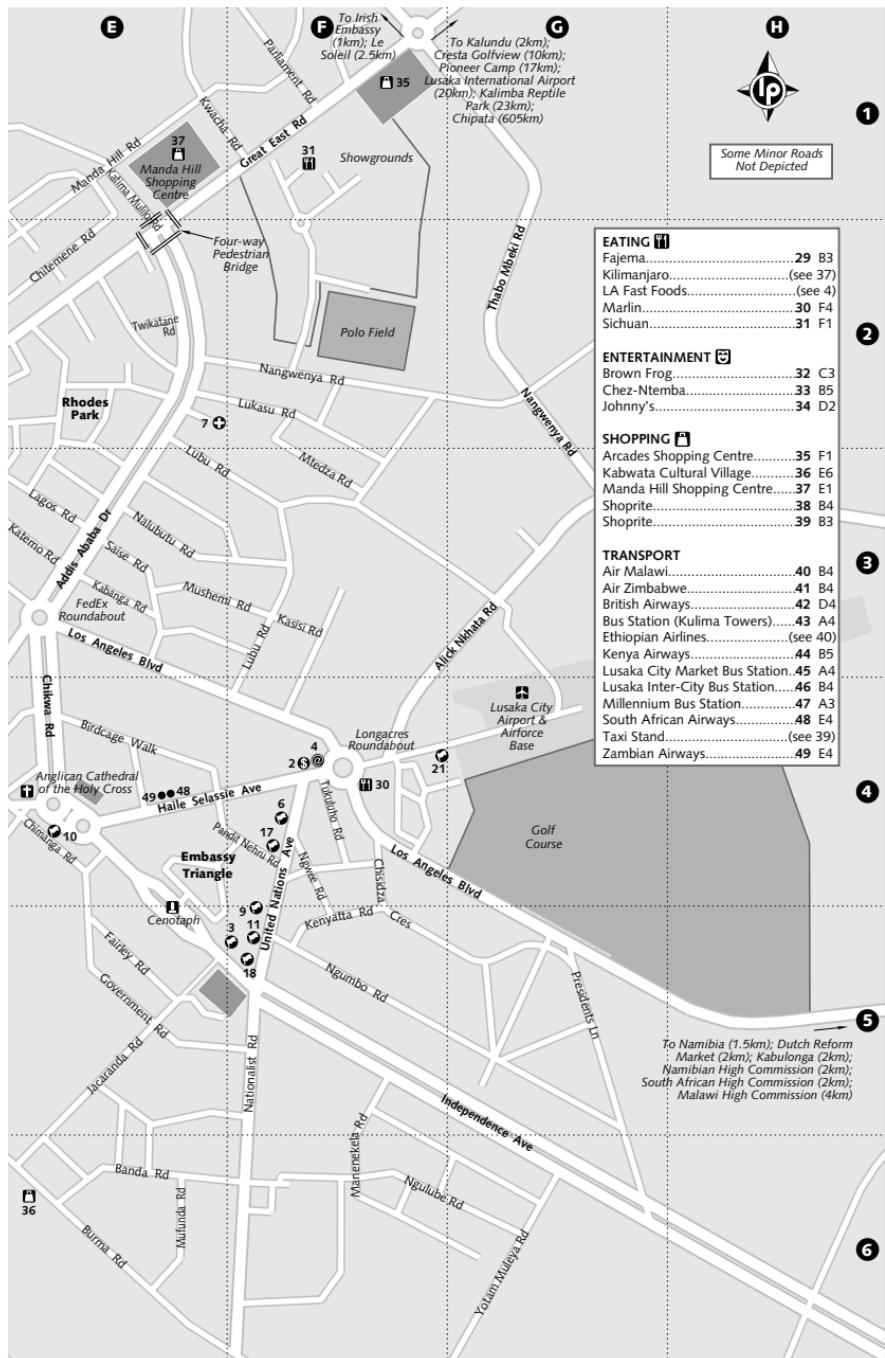
ORIENTATION

The main street, Cairo Rd, is lined with shops, cafés, supermarkets, travel agencies, banks and bureaux de change. To the north is a major traffic circle and landmark, the North End Roundabout; to the south is the South End Roundabout. East of Cairo Rd are the wide jacaranda-lined streets of the smarter residential suburbs and the area officially called Embassy Triangle. West of Cairo Rd are 'compounds' (read 'townships').

LUSAKA



0 500 m
0 0.3 miles



INFORMATION

Emergency

Ambulance (2992)

Police (991; Church Rd)

Internet Access

Café@la.com (Cairo Rd) This place is incredibly popular and modern, and there is a second branch at Longacres Roundabout.

I-Zone (Arcades Shopping Centre, Great East Rd) This café has the fastest connection in Lusaka, and you can even bring a laptop.

Medical Services

Good options include the private clinics **Care for Business** (254396; Addis Ababa Rd) and **Corpmed** (222612; Cairo Rd), behind Barclays Bank. For evacuations, both clinics work with **Specialty Emergency Services** (273303).

Money

Along Cairo Rd, Barclays, Standard Chartered Bank, Indo-Zambian Bank and Stanbic Bank have several branches with ATMs. These banks also have branches with ATMs at the Manda Hill and Arcades Shopping Centres (Great East Rd).

To change cash, try the **Zampost Bureau de Change** (inside the main post office, cnr Cairo & Church Rds); or **Prosper Bureau de Change** (Findeco House, South End Roundabout, Cairo Rd), which also offers reasonable rates for American Express travellers cheques.

Post

Main post office (cnr Cairo & Church Rds; 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-12.30pm Sat) Contains Zambia's only reliable poste restante.

Tourist Information

Zambia National Tourist Board (229087; www.zambiatourism.com; Century House, Cairo Rd; 8am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-12pm Sat) The head office has friendly enough staff, but information is limited to Lusaka and its environs.

Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA; 278524; zawaorg@zamnet.zm; Kafue Rd; 8am-5pm Mon-Fri) In Chilanga, about 16km south of the city centre, facing Munda Wanga.

Travel Agencies

Bush Buzz (256992; www.bush-buzz.com; Manda Hill Shopping Centre, Great East Rd) At the back of Kilimajaro, this agency is especially popular for trips to Kafue and Lower Zambezi National Parks.

Voyagers (253048; www.zambiatourism.com/voyagers; Suez Rd) Perhaps the most popular agency in Zambia, it arranges flights, hotel reservations and car hire.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Like most African cities, pickpockets take advantage of crowds, so be alert in the markets and bus stations and along the busy streets immediately west of Cairo Rd. At night, most streets are dark and often empty, so even if you're on a tight budget, take a taxi. If you have your own wheels, be aware that the incidence of armed carjacking is on the rise in Lusaka.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Though there's not much to see, the downstairs galleries in the **National Museum** (Nasser Rd; US\$2; 9am-4.30pm) offer a perfect snapshot of Zambia, both past and present. Highlights are the displays of contemporary Zambian paintings and sculpture.

The **Town Centre Market** (Chachacha Rd; 7am-7pm) is chaotic and, frankly, malodorous, but fascinating. Zambians get their bargains here, whether it's fruit or veggies, new or second-hand hardware, tapes or clothes. The market is relaxed and tourists don't get hassled.

Munda Wanga Environmental Park (278456; www.mundawanga.com; Kafue Rd, Chilanga; adult/child US\$4/2; 8am-5pm) rehabilitates all sorts of animals for re-entry into the wild. The park features plenty of regional flora and fauna, including two cheetahs and seven lions, though the American Black Bear (a gift from Kenneth Kaunda) looks a little out of place. It's about 16km south of central Lusaka and accessible by any minibus heading towards Chilanga or Kafue from the City Bus Station or South End Roundabout.

SLEEPING

Chachacha Backpackers (222257; www.chachachafaris.com; 161 Mulombwa Cl; camp site per person US\$5, dm US\$10, d without bathroom US\$25;) Traditionally popular with young backpackers, when we visited it was being renovated. The courtyard, pool and bar are inviting, and other facilities include a restaurant, laundry service, a communal kitchen, and baggage store.

Ku-omboka Backpackers (222450; kvirkley@zamtel.zm; Makanta Cl; dm US\$10, d without bathroom US\$33) A fairly new kid on the block, this is the best value for a backpacker passing through Lusaka, as it's clean, safe and cheap.

Endesha Guest House (✉ 225780; [Parirenyetwa Rd; d with/without US\\$65/53\) A cosy pension with eight rooms \(so book ahead\). The 'standard' rooms have unattached, but private, bathrooms, while the more expensive rooms have a private bathroom inside. The bar is chilled out and a great place to meet some interesting characters.](http://ParirenyetwaRd.d)

Lusaka Hotel (✉ 229049; lushotel@zam.net.zm; [Cairo & Katondo Rds; s/d US\\$88/96, d with air-con US\\$112; !\[\]\(6e934896f25e6ce1b0dbb50c23abc197_img.jpg\) !\[\]\(981418418f9aac823e1dd76bec2c811b_img.jpg\)](http://Cairo&KatondoRds.s/d)) Remarkably, this is the only hotel in the city centre. It's the longest-standing hotel in Lusaka and has almost top-end facilities for a midrange price. But the rooms are small and some are noisy.

Lilayi Lodge (✉ 279022; www.lilayi.com; s/d with breakfast from US\$90/100, incl all meals & activities US\$250/290;  ) This is one of Lusaka's finest options. The bungalows in this private wildlife reserve are very comfortable, and the gardens and pool are lovely. The lodge is about 8km off Kafue Rd and about 13km south of the city centre, and only accessible by taxi or car.

Taj Pamodzi Hotel (✉ 254455; pamodzi@zamnet.zm; Church Rd; s/d from US\$165/190;  ) By far the fanciest of the top-end hotels in Lusaka. It's a large multistorey complex with comfortable rooms offering views and all the mod cons.

EATING

Fajema (Cairo Rd; meals about US\$2) Just back from the main road, this is a far better place than the food stalls to try some tasty Zambian food while sitting inside a restaurant.

LA Fast Foods (Longacres Roundabout, Haile Selassie Ave; meals US\$2-3) An ideal place to grab a meal if you have to wait a while for your visa from any of the nearby embassies. Allow some time to plough through the confusing array of menus on the counter offering Chinese food, burgers, steaks and a hundred variations of 'chicken and chips'.

Kilimanjaro (Manda Hill Shopping Centre, Great East Rd; snacks US\$3-6) With a travel agency and an internet café, it serves tasty coffee and pastries, which can be enjoyed at tables or on couches.

Sichuan (✉ 253842; Showgrounds, off Nangwanya Rd; mains US\$11-17;   lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, dinner Sun) The best Chinese restaurant in Lusaka is bizarrely situated in a warehouse at the Showgrounds. However, the prices are reasonable and the ambience relaxing.

Marlin (✉ 252206; Longacres Roundabout, Los Angeles Blvd; mains US\$15-20;   lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, dinner

Mon) Housed in the colonial-era Lusaka Club, this perennial, wood-panelled favourite is the best steakhouse in Zambia. While they do serve gargantuan portions of every cut of meat under the sun, most guests come for the aged fillet with mushroom or pepper sauce. Reservations are strongly recommended.

ENTERTAINMENT

Johnny's (9 Lagos Rd;   lunch & dinner Mon-Thu, 7pm-late Fri & Sat;  ) An extremely popular nightclub with a tiki feel, Johnny's is the only discotheque in Zambia with an indoor pool, which the occasional drunken dancer jumps into. At weekends it costs US\$15 to enter.

Brown Frog (Kabelenga Rd;   10am-8pm Mon-Thu, 10am-3am Fri & Sat) Popular with NGO workers who come to dance at weekends, this British-style pub is a bit of an institution. At weekends you'll have to shell out US\$1.70 to enter.

Chez-Ntemba (Kafue Rd; US\$10;   9pm-6am Wed, Fri & Sat) This is the best nightclub in the downtown area, but only blasts loud rumba. It warms up at midnight and rocks until dawn.

SHOPPING

Manda Hill Shopping Centre (Great East Rd) and **Arcades Shopping Centre** (Great East Rd) are swish shopping plazas that are easy to reach by minibus from along Cairo Rd or from the Millennium Bus Station, or by taxi. As well as banks, bookshops, internet cafés, furniture stores, restaurants and fast-food outlets, the two shopping centres boast a huge Shoprite and Spar supermarkets, respectively. Shoprite has a few other locations in town too.

Kabwata Cultural Village (Burma Rd;   9am-5pm) is a scruffy collection of huts and stalls southeast of the city centre. Prices are cheap, however, because you can buy directly from the workers who live here. The specialties are carvings, baskets, masks, drums, jewellery and fabrics.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

For international and domestic flights to/from Lusaka, see p1071 and p1072.

Bus & Minibus

Bus and minibus services to surrounding towns such as Siavonga (US\$3.50) and Chirundu (US\$3) leave from either **Lusaka City Market Bus Station** (Lumumba Rd) or the **City Bus Station** (off Chachacha Rd), also called the Kulima Towers Station.

All long-distance public buses (and a few private ones) use the **Lusaka Inter-City Bus Station** (Dedan Kimathi Rd). From this terminal, buses and minibuses go several times a day to Ndola (US\$5, four hours), Kitwe (US\$5, five hours), Livingstone (US\$10, seven hours) and Chipata (US\$18, eight hours). Buses operated by JR Investments go to Mongu (US\$10, 12 hours) on Tuesday and Friday, and buses operated by CR Holdings depart daily for Kitwe, via Ndola, as well as Livingstone, Mongu and Chipata.

Train

The *Zambezi Express* to Livingstone (US\$6/8/10/13 economy/standard/1st class/sleeper, 18 hours), via Choma, leaves Lusaka at 7pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Tickets are available from the reservations office inside the **train station** (btwn Cairo & Dedan Kimathi Rds) from 3pm to 5pm on the day of departure. Get there early and be prepared to hustle and bustle. Slow, 'ordinary' trains to Ndola (US\$5.50, eight hours), via Kapiri Mposhi, depart Monday, Wednesday and Friday at about 10pm.

GETTING AROUND

Local minibuses run along Lusaka's main roads, but there are no route numbers or destination signs, so the system is difficult to work out. The standard fare is US\$0.50 to US\$0.75.

Official taxis can be identified by the numbers painted on the doors. They can be hailed along the street or found at ranks near the main hotels and markets, and outside the Shoprite supermarket on Cairo Rd.

EASTERN ZAMBIA

CHIPATA

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Chipata is the primary town near the Zambian side of the border with Malawi, and a base from which to venture into the South Luangwa National Park. It's lively and friendly, and boasts a large market (500m north of the town centre), as well as several bars, cafés, petrol stations and banks. There's an internet café on Pererenyawa Rd opposite the Finance Bank.

Sleeping & Eating

Dean's Hill View Lodge (021673; deanmitch@zamtel.zm; camp site US\$5, tw US\$20) Take the first right

after the welcome arch, just before the petrol station, and you'll find this great little place run by an affable British chap who has lived in the area for several years. It features twin rooms and camping, spacious and spotless shared bathroom and grand views over Chipata and the hills. Good, simple meals can be provided with prior notice.

Chachacha Backpackers (01-222257, 097 805483; www.chachachabackpackers.com; camp site US\$5, dm/d US\$10/25) This place has tidy dorms, space for camping in the small front garden, a backpacker's kitchen and a bar-lounge. It's the only place in town with dorms, but unfortunately it's not the friendliest of places. They do run excellent budget safaris though, and five days in South Luangwa National Park costs US\$495.

Mama Rula (mamarula@iwayafrica.com; camp site US\$8; s/d incl breakfast US\$80/100;) Four kilometres out of Chipata along the Mfuwe Rd, this huge, grassy, garden camp site with a large bar is very popular with the overland crowd. Next door is the bed and breakfast, which has a swimming pool, a good restaurant, an internet café, cosy en-suite rooms and a resident parrot.

Food Garden Restaurant (Umodzi Hwy; meals about US\$3) About 100 yards east of the traffic lights next to the Konica Photo Studio, bang on the main road. Serves decent Zambian food and has a good area outside to watch the world go by. The only downside is there's no beer.

Getting There & Away

Several bus companies in Lusaka offer services to Chipata. See opposite for details about travelling between Chipata and South Luangwa National Park.

SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK

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For scenery, variety of animals, accessibility and choice of accommodation, **South Luangwa** (per person/vehicle US\$25/15; 6am-6pm) is the best park in Zambia and one of the most majestic in Africa. Impalas, pukus and buffalo wander on the wide open plains, leopards, of which there are many in the park, hunt in the dense woodlands, herds of elephant wade through the marshes, and hippos munch serenely on nile cabbage in the Luangwa River.

The focal point is **Mfuwe**, a village with shops, a petrol station and a market. About 1.8km further on is **Mfuwe Gate**, the main

entrance to the park, where a bridge crosses Luangwa River and several cheaper lodges/camps and camp sites are set up. Most of the park is inaccessible between November and April (especially February and March), so many lodges close at this time.

Activities

Unlike other parks in Zambia, boat trips are not available in South Luangwa, but all lodges/camps run excellent day or night **wildlife drives** (all year) and **walking safaris** (June to November). These activities are included in the rates charged by the upmarket places, while the cheaper lodges/camps can organise activities with little notice. A two-hour morning or evening wildlife drive normally costs around US\$35, while a **night drive** (US\$40) offers the chance to spot an elusive leopard.

Sleeping & Eating

Flatdogs Camp (45068; www.flatdogscamp.com; camp site US\$5, chalets per person US\$35;  ) Has excellent facilities and is a great place to base yourself for a few days. The chalets are surprisingly luxurious, with large, mosaic-tiled bathrooms and self-catering facilities. The camping pitches in the riverside camp site have barbeques, washstands and waste bins and there are several tree platforms where the dexterous among you can pitch your tent. There's also an internet café, a pool, a bar and a restaurant with some of the best food in the valley.

Kawaza Village (www.kawazavillage.co.uk; US\$70 full board, day visits US\$20) This enterprise is run by the local Kunda people and gives tourists the opportunity to visit a real rural Zambian village while helping the local community. The village has four *rondavel* huts (each sleeps two) reserved for visitors, and there are open-air reed showers and long-drop toilets. Visitors are encouraged to take part in all aspects of village life such as learning how to cook *nshima* and other traditional food, attending local church services and visiting local schools.

Puku Ridge Camp (01-271366; www.starofafrica.com; ) Drop dead luxurious. The voluminous safari tents, of which there are only six, are a travel-agent's dream – they have massive mahogany beds, separate seating areas, sunken corner baths, indoor and outdoor showers (complete with puku-skull towel rails) and expansive balconies. There's a small open

lounge and bar area with a curved infinity pool below and a deck for wildlife watching. And the views are incredible: the plains stretch on for miles and there's so much wildlife on display you could easily forgo the safari drive and just get comfortably sozzled in the pool while watching the elephants prance around in front of you.

Mfuwe Lodge (254041; www.mfuwelodge.com; US\$295;  ) This lodge was rebuilt in 1998 and the results are impressive: a central restaurant and bar area, with a gigantic thatched roof and open sides, leading out onto a deck with swimming pool and splendid views over a lagoon. The hotel-standard rooms in the cottages (each cater for two or three people) have private verandas and fab bathrooms, with floor to ceiling windows and bathtubs with views of the river.

All the lodges/camps and camping grounds provide meals. There are also a couple of basic eateries in Mfuwe village. Moondog Café, next to the airport has a small menu of standard café food such as burgers, samosas and fish cakes, but the small portions are not particularly good value. **Cobra Resthouse** (meals US\$2.50-4) offers cheap Zambian stews, burgers and breakfasts.

Getting There & Away

Most people reach South Luangwa by air. Mfuwe (Masumba) airport is about 20km southeast of Mfuwe Gate and served by chartered flights from Lusaka and, occasionally, from Lilongwe (Malawi). **Zambian Airways** (01-256586/7, 01-271142) offers regular flights between Lusaka and Mfuwe every day except Monday for US\$200 one way.

To get to Mfuwe Gate and the surrounding camps you're better off in a 4WD. In the dry season the dirt road is usually poor and the drive takes about three hours. In the wet season, however, the drive can take all day (or be impassable), so seek advice before setting off.

Minibuses leave when they are very full one or two times a day between Chipata and Mfuwe village. Fares are squarely priced for foreigners (about US\$8). You'd be wise to offer some extra kwacha to the minibus driver to take you on to one of the camp sites near Mfuwe Gate.

LUANGWA BRIDGE

The Great East Road crosses the Luangwa River on a large suspension bridge about halfway between Lusaka and Chipata. The nearby

settlement of Luangwa Bridge serves as an ideal place to break up a journey. **Luangwa Bridge Camp** (✉ 873 763981315; bridgecamp@amosconnect.com; camp site per person US\$5, s/d chalets without bathroom US\$15/25; ) is on the western side of the river, about 3km south of the main road. This is an excellent place to base yourself for a couple of days of rest and relaxation. It features clean ablution blocks, cooking facilities and shady lawns, as well as a bar, restaurant and plunge pool. Short and long **hikes** and **canoe trips** can be arranged at the camp.

Get off any bus between Lusaka and Chipata at the place called 'Luangwa station', from where it's a 3km walk to the camp.

NORTHERN ZAMBIA

MPULUNGU

 04

Mpulungu is also a lively crossroads between eastern, central and southern Africa. Although it's always very hot, don't be tempted to swim in the lake because there are a few crocs. **Tangan-yika Lodge** (✉ 455130; camp site per person US\$5, chalets without bathroom per person US\$12-15) is in a superb spot about 6km west along the lake. A bar and restaurant are attached, and staff can help arrange fishing boats to Kalambo Falls. Look for the signpost along the main road about 5km before town. Otherwise, jump in any taxi boat going towards Kasakalwe village from near the Mpulungu market.

Isanga Bay Lodge (✉ 096 646991, 096 646992; www.isangabay.com; chalets per person from US\$40) is a beautiful Robinson Crusoe-esque lodge, perfect for a few days of snorkelling, water-skiing, beach volleyball or just plain lazing. Road access is possible with a 4WD, and boat transfers from Mpulungu are possible for \$80 per round trip.

Most buses/minibuses tie in with the Lake Tanganyika ferry. To/from Lusaka, RPS buses (US\$20, 18 hours) travel three times a week via Kasama and Mbala. Alternatively, take the Tazara train to Kasama, from where minibuses leave when bursting. Minibuses also depart from near the BP petrol station in Mpulungu for Mbala.

AROUND MPULUNGU

Kalambo Falls

About 40km northwest of Mbala, and along the border between Zambia and Tanzania, is the 221m-high **Kalambo Falls** (admission free;

permanently open). Kalambo is the second-highest single-drop waterfall in Africa; from spectacular viewpoints near the top of the falls, you can see the Kalambo River plummeting off a steep V-shaped cliff cut into the Great Rift Valley escarpment into a deep valley, which then winds down towards Lake Tanganyika.

There is nowhere to stay, so you'll have to day-trip from Mbala. If you don't have a vehicle, ask around the Old Soldier's Restaurant in Mbala (see below), where someone will take you for a negotiable US\$20 to US\$30 per person return. Many visitors also arrive by boat from Mpulungu.

MBALA

 04

Mbala is a small town perched on the edge of the Great Rift Valley from where the road north drops over 1000m in less than 40km down to Mpulungu and Lake Tanganyika. All buses/minibuses travelling between Mpulungu and Kasama stop in Mbala.

The **Moto Moto Museum** (admission US\$5;  9am-4.45pm), about 3km out of town, showcases a huge and fascinating collection of artefacts, focusing on the cultural life of the Bemba people of the surrounding area. The **Grasshopper Inn** (✉ 04-450589; s/d US\$7/10) has simple, clean rooms and **Old Soldier's Restaurant** (meals about US\$1.50), along the main street, offers good company and helpful information about local attractions.

KASAMA

 04

Kasama is the capital of the Northern Province and the cultural centre for the Bemba people. You might find yourself stuck here overnight if you're travelling between Lusaka and Mpulungu, or getting off the Tazara train before exploring the north. Places to stay include the **Thorn Tree Guesthouse** (✉ 221615; www.thorntreesafaris.com; 612 Zambia Rd; s US\$20, d US\$30) near the Heritage Centre, which offers comfortable rooms (all with breakfast) in lush and colourful gardens, and the **Elizabeth Guesthouse** (s/d without bathroom US\$6/12) near the Tazara station.

SHIWA NG'ANDU

 04

The vast estate of **Shiwa Ng'andu** (www.shiwanĝandu.com; tours US\$20;  9am-11am Mon-Sat, 10am-11am Sun) was established in the 1920s by British aristocrat Stewart Gore-Brown. At its heart is

Shiwa House, a splendid English-style mansion as described in *The Africa House* by Christina Lamb (see p1069).

Kapishya Hot Springs is about 20km west of Shiwa House, but still on the Shiwa Ng'andu estate. The setting is simply marvellous – a blue-green steaming lagoon surrounded by palms – and the springs are bath-water hot. It is possible to stay next to the springs at **Kapishya Lodge** (✉ 01-229261; www.shiwasafaris.com; camp site per person US\$10, self-catering chalets per person US\$60, incl meals & activities US\$130), and rather grand accommodation is also available at **Shiwa House** (www.shiwangandu.com; incl meals from US\$350) itself.

To reach Shiwa House, head along the highway by bus (or car) from Mpika for about 90km towards Chiosso. Look for the signpost to the west, from where a dirt road (13km) leads to the house. Kapishya Hot Springs and the Lodge are a further 20km along this track. There is no public transport along this last section, but vehicle transfers are available from the North Rd turnoff.

SAMFYA

Perched on the western shore of Lake Bangweulu, about 10km east of the main road between Mansa and Serenje, you'll find Samfya. This small trading centre and lake transport hub is small enough to get to know people and large enough to have rest houses, restaurants and bars. Just outside town is the majestic, sandy **Cabana Beach**. But stay away from the water; it may look inviting but it's full of crocs.

In Samfya, the **Transport Hotel** (s/d without bathroom US\$3/4, d with bathroom US\$10), at the port, offers basic rooms, whilst **Bangweulu Lodge** (camp site per person US\$5, s/d without bathroom US\$15/25) offers comfortable accommodation and a great camp site along Cabana Beach.

Samfya is regularly served by minibuses from Serenje. Buses between Lusaka and Mpulungu go via Serenje.

THE COPPERBELT

NDOLA & KITWE

✉ 02

These two towns lie at the heart of the industrial Copperbelt region, and although not tourist attractions in themselves, you might find yourself passing through on the way to Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage.

In Ndola (population 500,000), the **Royal Hotel** (✉ 610331; royalhotel@zamnet.zm; Vitanda St; s/d incl breakfast US\$33/60), though slightly dilapidated, is the best value in town. All rooms come with TV and bathroom. It's 1km north of the public bus station and 200m southwest of the train station.

In Kitwe (population 700,000) the **YMCA** (✉ / fax 218108; Independence Ave; d with/without US\$30/20), located one and a half kilometres north of the city centre, is a good choice – it's spotless and has cool blue satin blankets on every bed. Another good is **Mukwa Lodge** (✉ 224266; fax 230389; Mpezeni Ave; r with bathroom incl breakfast US\$100;  ) with its 11 gorgeous rooms, modern courtyard and an aviary full of parrots and parakeets.

The bright yellow buses operated by Marks Motorways, as well as express buses operated by CR Carriers, leave daily from Lusaka to Kitwe via Ndola (US\$8, five hours). Slow, 'ordinary' trains to Ndola (US\$5.50 standard class, eight hours), via Kapiri Mposhi, depart Monday, Wednesday and Friday at about 10pm.

CHIMFUNSHI WILDLIFE ORPHANAGE

On a farm 70km northwest of Chingola is this magnificent **chimpanzee sanctuary** (✉ 311293; www.chimfunshi.org.za; admission US\$15;  10am-5pm), home to over 80 adult and young chimps confiscated from poachers and traders in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo and other parts of Africa. It's apparently the largest of its kind in the world. This is not a natural wildlife experience, but it's still fascinating to observe the chimps as they feed, play and socialise.

The sanctuary is *not* interested in mass tourism, so only small numbers of visitors are allowed at any one time. And do not come if you're sick in any way; the chimps can easily die of a disease like the flu. Visitors can stay at the **camp site** (US\$5 per person) or **dormitory** (US\$20) at the education centre, which has self-catering facilities. Bookings are essential through accommodation manager, Sylvia Jones (2sylvia@bushmail.net).

By car, take the Solwezi Rd for about 100km northwest from Kitwe (the road passes Chingola), then turn right at the signposted junction and follow it for 19km. Buses between Chingola and Solwezi can drop you off at the junction, from where you'll have to hike to the sanctuary.

SOUTHEASTERN ZAMBIA

SIAVONGA

© 01

Siavonga is the main town and resort along the Zambian side of Lake Kariba. Just a few kilometres from the massive Kariba Dam, Siavonga is a quiet and low-key village. From here you can arrange houseboat trips on Lake Kariba and canoeing safaris on the Zambezi River.

Tours (free, but donations welcome) of Kariba Dam are run by the dam authorities. These tours can be arranged through your hotel/lodge. If you visit the dam, make sure you tell the Zambian immigration officers if you're not going on to Zimbabwe.

Leisure Bay Lodge also rents out **canoes** (per person per hr k25,000) and **Vundu Adventure** (© 097 485208), also based there, runs one-to-six-day camping canoe tours of the lake and river (US\$75 to US\$530 per person).

Eagles Rest (© 511168; www.eaglesrestresort.com; camp site per person US\$11, chalets US\$50; © ©) has twelve chalets overlooking the lake, with meals available in the restaurant. The camp site is secluded and shady. There's a nice sandy beach; just don't go in the lake, as the crocs would love to eat you. **Leisure Bay Lodge** (© /fax 511136; s/d incl breakfast US\$60/80; © ©) faces a beach along the lakeshore. It is by far the best value in Siavonga, although the food is nothing to write home about. Guests can pre-order meals (US\$10). Note that the beach is sometimes commandeered by resident hippos!

Minibuses from Lusaka (US\$10, three hours) leave when bursting to capacity for Siavonga and the nearby border. For the adventurous, a local ferry runs Tuesdays between Siavonga and Chipepo (US\$11 one way, 12 hours). Check at the ferry jetty in Siavonga about the current timetable (if there is one).

LOWER ZAMBEZI NATIONAL PARK

Zambia's newest **national park** (admission US\$20; © 6am-6pm) covers 4092 sq km along the north-western bank of the Zambezi River, opposite the Mana Pools National Park in Zimbabwe. Overlooked for many years, this is now one of Zambia's premier parks, with a beautiful flood plain alongside the river, dotted with acacias and other large trees, and flanked by a steep escarpment on the northern side, covered with thick miombo woodland.

The best wildlife viewing is on the flood plain and along the river itself, so **boat rides** are a major feature of all camps and lodges. Seeing groups of elephant swim across the river could be the highlight of your trip.

The main entrance is at **Chongwe Gate** along the southwestern boundary, though there are gates along the northern and eastern boundaries for hardy travellers.

Sleeping

Community Campsite (camp site US\$5) A basic place a few kilometres before Chongwe Gate. It's mainly set up for travellers with their own vehicles. Run by local people, the modest profits are put back into the community.

Mvuu Lodge (© South Africa 27-16-9871837; www.mvuu-lodge.com; safari tents d/tw both \$100) This lodge has comfortable tented rooms overlooking the Zambezi River with balconies and sandy outdoor fireplaces that are lit outside your tent every night. The food is good and the hosts are super-friendly.

Kaylia Lodge (© 3320606; www.safpar.com; incl meals US\$250; ©) A beautiful lodge with en-suite chalets smack bang on the river. The ordinary chalets are nice enough, but the best is the tree-house suite – a chalet accessed by ladder, high up in a sausage tree, with a massive shower room constructed around its base. The dining and bar area has one of the funkiest toilets around, built inside the hollow of a baobab tree – great fun, and you'll also have the odd bat for company.

Getting There & Away

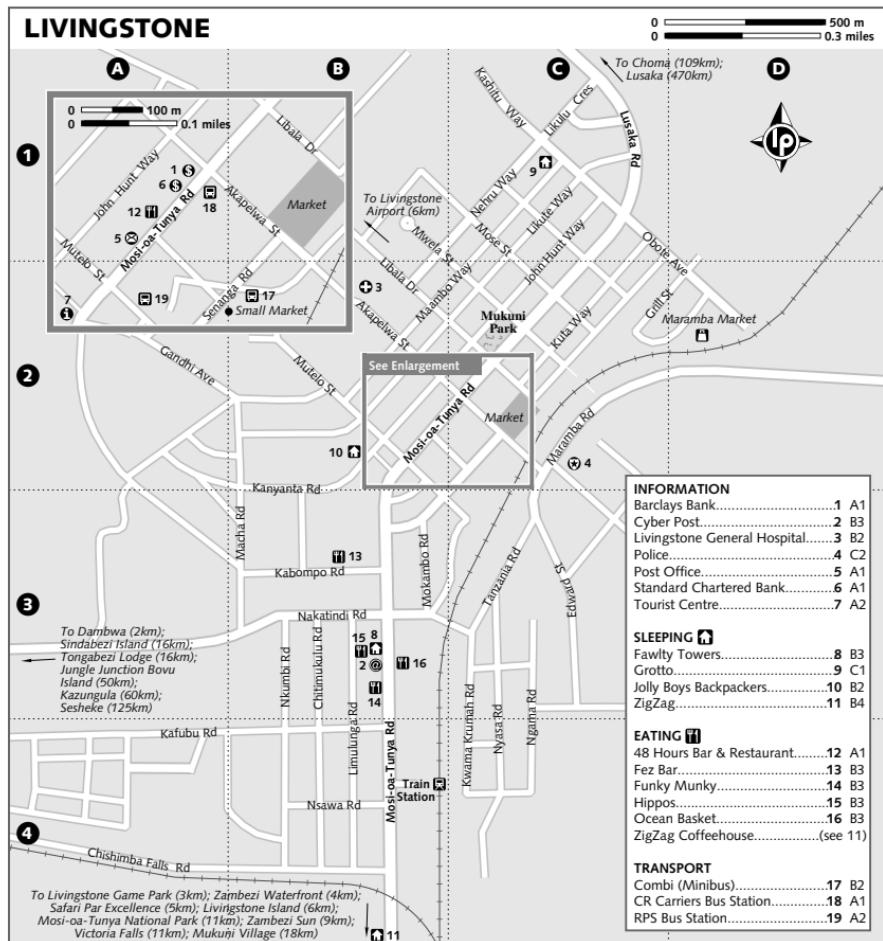
There's no public transport to Chongwe Gate, nor anything to the eastern and northern boundaries, and hitching is very difficult. Most people visit the park on an organised tour, and/or stay at a lodge that offers wildlife drives and boat rides as part of the deal.

SOUTHWESTERN ZAMBIA

LIVINGSTONE & VICTORIA FALLS

© 03

When an awestruck David Livingstone first saw Victoria Falls in 1855, he wrote in his journal 'on sights as beautiful as this, angels in their flight must have gazed'. He named the falls after the queen of England at the time, but



they were (and still are) known as *Mosi-oa-Tunya* in the Kololo language – ‘The Smoke that Thunders’. While Zimbabwe struggles to maintain its crumbling infrastructure, the recent tourist swing to Livingstone and the Zambian side of the falls has initiated a construction boom in the area. Local business owners are riding the tourism wave straight to the bank, and the Zambezi waterfront is rapidly being developed as one of the most exclusive destinations in southern Africa. The town abounds with hotels, restaurants and bars catering to budget and well-to-do travellers alike, and there are enough adrenaline activities on offer to make you think twice about leaving town immediately after stopping to see the falls.

Information

EMERGENCY

Livingstone General Hospital (321475) Located on Akapelwa St.

Police (320116; Maramba Rd)

INTERNET ACCESS

Cyber Post (216 Mosi-oa-Tunya Rd; per hr US\$4) Offers internet access, international phone calls and faxes.

MONEY

Barclays Bank (cnr Mosi-oa-Tunya Rd & Akapelwa St) and **Standard Chartered Bank** (Mosi-oa-Tunya Rd) accept major brands of travellers cheques, offer cash advances on Visa and MasterCard, and change money.

POST

Post Office (Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd) Has a poste restante and fax service.

Tourist Information

Tourist Centre (321404; Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd; 8am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) This is mildly useful and has a few brochures and maps.

Dangers & Annoyances

Don't walk from town to the falls as there have been a number of muggings along this stretch of road – even tourists on bicycles have been attacked.

Sights

If it isn't already there, put Victoria Falls at the top of your sightseeing itinerary. This waterfall is simply spectacular and must be seen, felt and heard to be understood. You can see the falls up close at the Victoria Falls section of **Mosi- oa-Tunya National Park** (admission US\$10; 6am-6pm). The entrance is just before the Zambian border post. Mosi- oa-Tunya National Park also has a small wildlife reserve, **Mosi- oa-Tunya Game Park** (admission US\$3; 6am-6pm), which has a good selection of animals including giraffes, zebras, antelopes and a few heavily guarded rhinos.

Another top attraction in the area is **Livingstone Island**, which is where the famous explorer caught his first glimpse of the falls. The island is located in the middle of the Zambezi River at the top of the falls, so you can literally hang your feet off the edge. Tours to the falls (from US\$45) can be arranged at your hotel or hostel.

Mukuni Village (admission US\$3; dawn-dusk) is a 'traditional' Leva village that welcomes tourists on guided tours. Although the village can be inundated with tourists at times, the admission fee does fund community projects.

Activities

Adrenaline junkies of the world unite – if you've got the cash, they've got the fix. See opposite for a list of companies who can hook you up with your adventure of choice.

Spend the day scrambling up rocks, abseiling down cliffs and swinging across canyons in the scenic Batoka Gorge. Half-/full-day **abseiling** excursions cost from US\$80/100. Tackling the third-highest **bungee jump** in the world (111m) costs a mere US\$90 (US\$130 for tandem).

High-water **rafting** runs through Rapids 11 to 18 (or 23), which are relatively mundane and can be done between 1 July and 15 August, though in high rainfall years they may begin as early as mid-May. Wilder low-water runs operate from roughly 15 August to late December, taking in the winding 22km from rapids four to 18 (or 23) if you put in on the Zimbabwean side, and from Rapids one to 18 (or 23) if you put in on the Zambian side. Half-/full-day trips cost about US\$110/125, and overnight trips about US\$165. Longer jaunts can also be arranged. Although most travellers are set on rafting the Zambezi, there are plenty of thrills to be had by **canoe** or **kayak**; half-/full-day trips along the Zambezi cost from US\$60/75; overnight jaunts cost about US\$150, and three-night trips start at US\$300.

What about lying on a boogie board and careering down the rapids? 'Waterfall surfing', as it's sometimes called, costs from US\$135/150 for a half/full day. The best time of year for **river-boarding** is February to June. Why avoid whirlpools in a raft when you can drive straight into them in a **jet boat**? This hair-raising trip costs US\$90, and is combined with a **cable-car ride** down into the Batoka Gorge.

The aptly named 'Flight of the Angels' is a 15-minute **helicopter joy ride** (US\$90) over the falls, or 30 minutes (US\$180) across the falls and Zambezi National Park. Motorised hang-gliders offer the best views from the air, and the pilot will take pictures for you with a camera fixed to the wing. **Microlight/Ultralight flights** cost about US\$85/104 (15 minutes) over the falls and about US\$160/185 (30 minutes) over the falls and Zambezi National Park.

It's easy enough to spot wildlife from a boat, though some passengers seem more interested in the free drinks. **River cruises** along the Zambezi range from civilised jaunts on the 'African Queen' to full on, all-you-can-drink booze cruises. Prices range from US\$30 to US\$60. A guided **wildlife safari drive** in Mosi- oa-Tunya Game Park will maximise your chances of a face-to-face encounter with one of the few remaining white rhinos in Zambia. Game drives cost around US\$45. Live out your wildest African dreams on an **elephant-back safari** through the bush. A half-day excursion costs US\$120 plus US\$10 for park fees.

Appreciate the beauty and grandeur of Mother Nature by burning litres upon litres of her precious natural resources – a one-hour **quadbiking** spin costs US\$60.

Tours

Below is a list of well-established and reputable travel and adventure operators. Keep in mind however that this list is by no means comprehensive, and that the industry is changing rapidly. Note the majority of companies do not have offices, and instead work in conjunction with larger tour operators, booking agencies, hotels and hostels.

Abseil Zambia (✉ 321188; www.thezambeziswing.com) Operates the gorge swing across Batoka Gorge.

African Extreme (✉ 324423) Operates the bungee jump over the Victoria Falls bridge.

Batoka Sky (✉ 323672; www.batokasky.com) Specialises in flights over the falls.

Bundu Adventures (✉ 324407; www.bunduadventures.com) Offers river-boarding and rafting.

Bwaato Adventures (✉ 324227; bwaato@zamnet.zm) Runs wildlife drives and walks.

Jet Extreme (✉ 321375; www.jetextreme.com) Does jet-boating in the Batoka Gorge.

Makora Quest (✉ 324574; quest@zamnet.zm) Organises tranquil canoeing trips in Klepper canoes.

Raft Extreme (✉ 323929; www.raftextreme.com) Offers river-boarding and rafting.

Safari Par Excellence (✉ 326629; www.safpar.com) Offers a variety of activities, though they're well regarded for their rafting trips.

Taonga Safaris (✉ 324081) Runs booze and sunset cruises.

Zambezi Elephant Trails (✉ 321629; www.zambezi-safari.com) Specialises in elephant-back safaris.

Sleeping

Grotto (✉ 323929; grotto@zamnet.zm; 2 Maambo Way; camp site per person US\$3;  ) This shady camp site, which is adjacent to a lovely colonial home and a manicured garden, caters mostly for overland trucks.

Fawley Towers (✉ 323432; www.adventureafrica.com; 216 Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd; camp site per person US\$5, dm/d from US\$8/20;   ) This lush oasis next to the Livingstone Adventure Centre has a large enclosed garden with a shady lawn and a sprawling pool, as well as a relaxed, congenial backpacker vibe.

Jolly Boys Backpackers (✉ 324229; www.backpackzambia.com; 34 Kanya Rd; camp site per person US\$4, dm/d from US\$6/25;   ) The entire property, from the sunken pillow lounge to the lofty observation tower, was painstakingly designed by the fun-loving owners.

ZigZag (✉ 322814; www.zigzagzambia.com; Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd; s/d/fUS\$35/60/70;   ) Cutesy rooms are well decorated with African parapherna-

lia, while the grounds feature a quaint coffee house (see below), a lovely swimming pool and a small craft shop.

Jungle Junction Bovu Island (✉ 323708; www.junglejunction.info; camp site per person US\$8-15, huts per person incl all meals US\$40-50;  ) Located on a lush island in the middle of the Zambezi, the Jungle Junction attracts travellers who want to do nothing more than lounge beneath the palm trees.

Tongabezi Lodge (✉ 323235; www.tongabezi.com; cottages/open-faced houses per person US\$430/530;  ) Tongabezi is comprised of several spacious cottages and open-faced 'houses', which incorporate living trees as part of their structures. Guests are also invited to spend an evening on nearby Sindabezi Island (US\$350 per person per night).

Eating & Drinking

48 Hours Bar & Restaurant (Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd; snacks/mains US\$2-3) This unassuming spot serves up cheap eats and takeaway including burgers, meats and local dishes.

Funky Munk (216 Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd; snacks/mains US\$2-4) This laid-back bistro is a popular backpackers' hangout. Funky Monkey serves up salads, baguettes and pizzas in a comfortable setting.

ZigZag Coffee House (Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd; US\$3-5) This alluring coffee house offers a diverse range of dishes, from tacos to tandoori, and is ideal for a coffee or milk shake.

Fez Bar (Kabompo Rd; US\$3-6) This Moroccan inspired bar and lounge serves tasty and eclectic meals throughout the day, though things really get kicking here once the sun goes down.

Hippos (Limulunga Rd; mains US\$3-6) This raucous bar-cum-restaurant at the back of Fawley Towers is housed underneath a soaring two-storey thatched roof.

Ocean Basket (82 Mosi- oa-Tunya Rd; US\$4-8) Sure, you're dining on seafood in a land-locked country, but the quality and selection here is surprisingly good.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Nationwide Airlines (✉ 03-323360; www.flynationwide.co.za) Daily flights from Johannesburg to Livingstone (US\$195 one way).

South African Airways (✉ Lusaka-254350) Flies once a day from Johannesburg (US\$200 one way).

Zambian Airways (✉ Lusaka 271230) Flies daily from Lusaka (from US\$180 one way) and from Mfuwe (US\$300 one way).

BUS & TRAIN

RPS (Mutelo St) has two bus services a day to Lusaka (US\$8, seven hours). **CR Carriers** (cnr Mosi-oa-Tunya Rd & Akapelwa St) runs four services a day to Lusaka (US\$9, seven hours). Buses to Shesheke (US\$7, five hours) leave around 10am from Mingongo bus station next to the Catholic church at Dambwa village, 3km west of the town centre. Direct buses to Mongu (US\$11, nine hours) leave at midnight from Maramba market, though you might feel more comfortable catching a morning bus to Shesheke, and then transferring to a Mongu bus (US\$5, four hours). Combis to the Botswana border at Kazungula (US\$2.50, one hour) leave from Dambwa on Nakatindi road. The **Zambezi Express** leaves Livingstone for Lusaka (US\$4/5/7/8 for economy/standard/1st class/sleeper, 15 hours), via Choma, on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday at 7pm. Reservations are available at the **train station** (✉ 320001), signposted off Mosi-oa-Tunya Rd.

Getting Around

Livingstone Airport is located 6km northwest of town, and is easily accessible by taxi (US\$5 each way). Combis run regularly along Mosi-oa-Tunya Rd to Victoria Falls and the Zambian border (US\$0.50, 15 minutes). Taxis, which can be easily identified by their sky-blue colour, cost about US\$4.

MONGU

✉ 07

The largest town in Barotseland, and the capital of Western Province, Mongu is spread out, but boasts a pleasant lively feel, so a walk along the main street is always interesting. Around the **harbour** is a fascinating settlement of reed-and-thatch buildings, where local fishermen sell their catch, and passenger boats take people to outlying villages.

Mongu really comes alive once a year, when thousands of people flock here for the **Ku'omboka ceremony** held annually in March or early April. This colourful ceremony takes place when the king of the Lozi people moves from his dry-season palace out on the plains to his wet-season palace on higher ground. The king is transported to higher ground on a decorated river barge. The wet-season palace is at **Limulunga**, about 20km north of Mongu, where you'll find a museum containing exhibits about the Lozi people and the Ku'omboka ceremony.

Lyamba Hotel (✉ 21138; Lusaka Rd; d incl breakfast US\$15), 1.2km west of the public bus station and past the post office, is a little bit run-down, but is good value, and guests can enjoy fine views from the garden. **Mongu Lodge** (✉ 221501; Mwanawina St; d without bathroom US\$30, d with bathroom & air-con US\$60, all incl breakfast; ) is located just south of the Lyamba. It's worth paying extra for the renovated rooms with a bathroom and air-con.

Several companies offer buses between Lusaka and Mongu (US\$10, 12 hours) at least every day. A bus travels between Livingstone and Mongu (US\$10, 10 hours) twice a week via Sesheke, Kalongola and Senanga. Minibuses and pick-ups leave on a fill-up-and-go basis from near the Caltex filling station in Mongu for Senanga (US\$4, three hours), from where minibuses head to Sesheke.

ZAMBIA DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

There isn't a great range of budget accommodation on offer in Zambia. The widest choice is in Livingstone, but Lusaka also has a couple of backpackers' hostels. However, there are plenty of cheap local guesthouses throughout the country. Most towns will also have one or two midrange accommodation options, with en-suite rooms going for around US\$40 to US\$50 per double.

All national parks have expensive privately operated lodges and 'camps' which will set you back around US\$200 or more per person per night. These rates usually include all meals, drinks and activities, such as wildlife drives.

ACTIVITIES

Companies in Livingstone offer a bewildering array of activities, such as white-water rafting, river-boarding and bungee jumping. The less adventurous may want to try some hiking and horse riding. Canoeing is also a great way to explore the Zambezi River and can be arranged in Siavonga (or Kariba in Zimbabwe).

Many tour companies in Livingstone offer short wildlife drives in Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park near Victoria Falls, while companies in Lusaka and Livingstone can also arrange longer wildlife safaris to more remote national parks.

PRACTICALITIES

- The metric system is used in Zambia.
- Electricity supply is 220V to 240V/50Hz and plugs are of the British three-prong variety.
- *The Daily Times* and *Daily Mail* are dull, government-controlled rags. The *Independent Post* (www.postzambia.com), featuring a column by Kenneth Kaunda, continually needles the government.
- Monthly *Lowdown* magazine (www.lowdown.co.zm; k3000) has useful information for visitors such as restaurant reviews and lists of upcoming events in the capital, as well as handy adverts for package deals for lodges around Zambia. Semi-annual *Kapaso* magazine (k5000) is the Copperbelt's answer to *Lowdown*.
- Both of the Zambian National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) radio stations can be heard nationwide; they play Western and African music, as well as news and chat shows in English.

BOOKS

The Africa House, by Christina Lamb, tells the story of Stewart Gore-Brown and his grand plans for a utopian fiefdom in a remote part of Zambia during the 1920s. His country mansion at Shiwa Ng'andu is still standing (see p1062).

Although a personalised selection of observations on wildlife and humans, *Kakuli*, by Norman Carr, also raises deeper issues and suggests some practical solutions to current conservation problems. The author spent a lifetime working with animals and people in the South Luangwa National Park.

Zambia, by Richard Vaughan, is a highly recommended coffee-table book with superb photographs. It covers the magnificent landscape and wildlife, but also the less 'touristy' aspects, such as city life and mining.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Generally, Zambia is very safe, though in the cities and tourist areas there is always a chance of being targeted by muggers or con-artists. As always, you can reduce the risk considerably by being sensible.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Zambian Embassies & Consulates

Zambia has high commissions in Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Zambian embassies and high commissions are located in Angola, Kenya and Tanzania, as well as in the following countries:

Belgium (☎ 02-343 5649; embassyofzambia@skynet.be; 469 Ave Moliere, 1060 Brussels)

Germany (☎ 030-2062940; www.sambia-botschaft.de; Axel-Springer-Strasse 154A, 10117 Berlin)

Sweden (☎ 08-6799040; www.zambiaembassy.se;

Engelbrektsgatan 7, Stockholm)

UK (☎ 020-7589 6655; www.zhcl.org.uk; 2 Palace Gate, London W8 5NG)

USA (☎ 202-265 9717; www.zambiaembassy.org; 2419 Massachusetts NW, Washington, DC 20008)

Embassies & Consulates in Zambia

The following countries have embassies or high commissions in Lusaka (area code ☎ 01). The British High Commission looks after the interests of Aussies and Kiwis, since the nearest diplomatic missions for Australia and New Zealand are in Harare (Zimbabwe). Most consulates are open 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 12.30pm Friday, though visas are usually only dealt with in the mornings.

Canada (☎ 250833; fax 254176; 5119 United Nations Ave)

France (☎ 251322; fax 254475; 74 Independence Ave, Cathedral Hill)

Germany (☎ 250644; 5209 United Nations Ave)

Malawi (☎ 096 437573; fax 260225; 31 Bishops Rd, Kabulonga)

Mozambique (☎ 220333; fax 220345; 9592 Kacha Rd, off Paseli Rd)

Namibia (☎ 260407/8; fax 263858; 30B Mutende Rd, Woodlands)

Netherlands (☎ 253819; fax 253733; 5208 United Nations Ave)

South Africa (☎ 260349; 26D Cheetah Rd, Kabulonga)

Tanzania (☎ 253223/4; fax 254861; 5200 United Nations Ave)

UK (☎ 251133; fax 251923; 5210 Independence Ave)

USA (☎ 250955; cnr Independence & United Nations Aves)

Zimbabwe (☎ 254006; fax 254046; 11058 Haile Selassie Ave)

HOLIDAYS

During the following public holidays, most businesses and government offices are closed:

New Year's Day 1 January

Youth Day Second Monday in March

Easter March/April – Good Friday, Saturday & Easter

Monday

Labour/Workers' Day 1 May

Africa (Freedom) Day 25 May

Heroes' Day First Monday in July

Unity Day First Tuesday in July

Farmers' Day First Monday in August

Independence Day 24 October

Christmas Day 25 December

Boxing Day 26 December

INTERNET ACCESS

There are internet centres in Lusaka, Livingstone and Chipata. Access at internet centres is cheap – about US\$1.50 for 30 minutes – but irritatingly slow at times.

LANGUAGE

Of the 70 languages and dialects spoken in Zambia, seven are recognised by the government as official 'special languages'. These include Bemba (mainly spoken in the north); Tonga (in the south); Nyanja (in the east), which is similar to Chichewa spoken in Malawi; and Lozi (in the west).

As a lingua franca, and the official, national language, English is widely spoken across Zambia.

MEDIA

The *Daily Times*, *Daily Mail* and *Post* are the main national daily newspapers. Major international papers and magazines are also available in bookshops in Lusaka. The *Lowdown* magazine has news and information on events around Lusaka, and other useful tourist information.

MONEY

Zambia's unit of currency is the kwacha (k), sometimes listed as 'ZMK' (Zambian kwacha) or 'kw'. Inflation is high in Zambia, and due to elections in late 2006 and the skyrocketing price of copper, some prices are quoted in kwacha and others in US dollars (US\$), as different businesses base their rates on the different currencies.

In the cities and larger towns, you can change cash and travellers cheques at branches

of Barclays Bank and Standard Chartered Bank. Larger branches have ATMs that accept Visa. Foreign exchange offices – almost always called bureau de change – are easy to find in all cities and larger towns.

POST

Postcards and normal letters (under 20g) cost US\$0.90 to send to Europe and US\$1.10 to the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Sending international letters from Lusaka is surprisingly quick (three or four days to Europe), but from elsewhere in the country it's less reliable and much slower.

TELEPHONE

Public phones operated by Zamtel use tokens, which are available from post offices (US\$0.15) or local boys (US\$0.30) hanging around phone booths. These tokens last three minutes, but are only good for calls within Zambia. Phone booths operated by Tele2africa use phone cards (from US\$7), available from post offices and grocery shops; these phone cards can be used for international calls. But it's often easier to find a 'phone shop' or 'fax bureau', from where all international calls cost about US\$4 per minute.

Mobile Phones

MTN, Celtel and Zamcell all offer mobile (cell) phone networks. If you own a GSM phone, you can buy a SIM card for US\$5 without a problem, and top-up cards are widely available. Numbers starting with 095, 096, 097 and 099 are mobile phone numbers.

TOURIST INFORMATION

The **Zambia National Tourist Board** (ZNTB; www.zambia-tourism.com) has two international offices: in the **UK** (020-7589 6655; zntb@aol.com; 2 Palace Gate, Kensington, London W8 5NG) and in **South Africa** (012-326 1847; zahpta@mweb.co.za; 589 Ziervogel St, Arcadia, Pretoria). The official ZNTB website is outstanding and provides links to dozens of lodges, hotels and tour agencies.

VISAS

All foreigners visiting Zambia need visas, but for most nationalities tourist visas are available at major borders, airports and sea ports. But it's important to note that you should have a Zambian visa *before* arrival if travelling by train or boat from Tanzania.

Citizens of South Africa and Zimbabwe can obtain visas on arrival for free. For all other nationalities, tourist visas are issued on arrival, but cost about US\$25 for a transit visa (valid for seven days), US\$25/40 for a single-/double-entry visa (valid for three months) and US\$100 for a multiple-entry visa (valid for three years). Brits, however, are slugged for transit/single/double/multiple-entry visas US\$60/60/80/80.

Visas for Onward Travel

It's always best to visit any embassy or high commission in Lusaka between 9am and noon from Monday to Friday.

Visas for Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tanzania and Botswana are easy to obtain on arrival at the borders of these countries for most visitors. However, if you're travelling by train or boat to Tanzania, check with the Tanzanian high commission in Lusaka about whether you need a visa beforehand. If so, three-month visas cost from US\$25 to US\$50 (depending on your nationality). You cannot obtain a visa for Namibia at the border; tourist visas are either free or cost US\$30, depending on your nationality, in Lusaka. For Mozambique, transit visas (valid for seven days) cost US\$11, single-entry visas (for one month) cost US\$20, and multiple-entry visas (for three months) cost US\$40.

TRANSPORT IN ZAMBIA

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Zambia's main borders are open from 6am to 6pm except for those at Victoria Falls, which close at 8pm and Chirundu, which closes at 7pm.

Air

Zambia's main international airport is in Lusaka, though some international airlines fly to the airport at Livingstone (for Victoria Falls), Mfuwe (for the South Luangwa National Park) and Ndola. The major domestic and international carrier is **Zambian Airways** (www.zambianairways.com). Zambia is well connected to the region. Zambian Airways flies daily between Lusaka and Harare (Zimbabwe; US\$155/305 one way/return), while **Air Zimbabwe** (www.airzim.co.zw) also flies to Lusaka (US\$150/295) from Harare on the way to Nairobi (Kenya) each Thursday.

DEPARTURE TAX

The departure tax for all international flights is US\$20. The departure tax for domestic flights is US\$5. These taxes are *not* included in the price of your airline ticket and must be paid at the airport (in US dollars only).

Air Malawi connects Lusaka with Lilongwe (Malawi) three times a week (US\$150/200) and with Blantyre (Malawi; US\$185/299) twice a week. Comair (a subsidiary of British Airways) and South African Airways both fly daily between Lusaka and Johannesburg (South Africa) for about US\$200/295.

Nationwide Airlines (✉ 03-323360; www.flynationwide.co.za) has daily flights from Johannesburg to Livingstone, and **South African Airways** (✉ in Lusaka 254350) connects Johannesburg with Lusaka (US\$155/300) and also flies into Livingstone (US\$200/395).

Land

BOTSWANA

Several minibuses leave Livingstone every day for the terminal used by the pontoon ferry to Kazungula (US\$4, 12 hours). The pontoon carries motorbikes/cars/4WDs for US\$5/15/20, while foot passengers are free. From the Botswana border, minibuses regularly leave for Kasane.

A quicker and more comfortable (but more expensive) way to reach Botswana from Zambia is to cross from Livingstone to Victoria Falls (in Zimbabwe), from where shuttle buses head to Kasane. From the **Lusaka Inter-City Bus Terminal** (Dedan Kimathi Rd) Seabelo Express has buses to Gaborone (US\$70, 22 hours), via Kasane and Francistown on Tuesday and Saturday.

MALAWI

Direct buses between Lusaka and Lilongwe are infrequent and slow, so it makes sense to do this trip in stages. From the BP petrol station on the main street in Chipata, regular minibuses (US\$2) run the 30km to the Zambian border. Once you've passed through Zambian customs, it's a few minutes walk to the Malawian entry post from where you can get a shared taxi to Mchinji for around US\$1.50 per person followed by a minibus to Lilongwe (US\$2).

MOZAMBIQUE

There is no public transport between Zambia and Mozambique and the only common border leads to a remote part of Mozambique. Most travellers, therefore, chose to visit Mozambique from Lilongwe in Malawi.

NAMIBIA

Every day, at least one bus and several minibuses leave Livingstone for Sesheke (US\$7, six hours). The bus may terminate in Sesheke or continue another 5km to the pontoon (car ferry). The pontoon carries motorbikes/cars/4WDs for US\$10/20/30, while foot passengers travel for free. If the pontoon isn't operating, foot passengers pay about US\$1.50 to cross by dugout canoe, and vehicles are stuck at the border.

From the Namibian side, it's a 5km walk to Katima Mulilo, from where minibuses depart for other parts of Namibia.

Alternatively, cross from Livingstone to Victoria Falls (in Zimbabwe) and catch a shuttle bus to Windhoek (Namibia).

SOUTH AFRICA

For South Africa, City to City has buses every day to Johannesburg (26 hours). Chat Boeing travels to Jo'burg four days per week, but their buses are not as comfortable as those offered by City to City, though tickets are slightly cheaper. In addition, the reliable Translux buses travel to Jo'burg twice a week. All buses between Lusaka and Jo'burg travel via Harare, Masvingo and Pretoria.

TANZANIA

Boat

The MV Liemba leaves from Mpulungu harbour every Friday, arriving in Kigoma, Tanzania on Sunday. Fares for 1st, 2nd and economy class are US\$60/45/35. Visas can be issued on the ferry and cost US\$50.

Bus

Services to Dar es Salaam from Lusaka (US\$35, 24 hours) run once or twice a week, but aren't very reliable. Alternatively, walk across the border from Nakonde, and take a minibus from Tunduma to Mbeya in Tanzania.

Train

The Tazara railway company usually operates two international trains per week between Kapiri Mposhi (207km north of Lusaka) and Dar es Salaam. The 'express train' (42 to 45 hours)

leaves Kapiri Mposhi at 4pm on Tuesday and Friday, while the 'interstate train' (50 to 52 hours) leaves Kapiri Mposhi at noon on Friday. The fares on both trains are US\$60/50/35 in 1st/2nd/3rd class (1st and 2nd class are sleeping compartments). A discount of 50% is possible with a student card.

ZIMBABWE

To Zimbabwe, take any bus going to South Africa. If you're travelling from Siavonga, take a minibus or charter a car to the border, and walk (or take a shared taxi) across the impressive Kariba Dam to Kariba, from where buses leave daily to Harare.

GETTING AROUND

Air

The main domestic airports are at Lusaka, Livingstone, Ndola, Kitwe, Mfuwe, Kasama and Kasaba Bay, though dozens of minor airstrips cater for chartered planes.

AIRLINES IN ZAMBIA

Scheduled internal flights are offered by **Zambian Airways** (✉ 256586-8; www.zambianairways.com), **Proflight Air Services** (✉ 271139; www.proflight-zambia.com) and occasionally, **South African Airlink** (www.saairlink.co.za). Tickets can be booked through any travel agent in Zambia. The schedule for Zambian Airways includes the following:

Flights between	Frequency	Fare (US\$)
Lusaka & Livingstone	daily	180
Lusaka & Mfuwe	daily	200
Lusaka & Ndola	daily	130

Bus & Minibus

Distances are long, buses are often slow and many roads are badly potholed, so travelling around Zambia by bus and minibus can exhaust even the hardiest of travellers, even those who do like a good butt massage.

All main routes are served by ordinary public buses, which run on a fill-up-and-go basis or have fixed departures (these are called 'time buses'). 'Express buses' are faster – often terrifyingly so – and stop less often, but cost about 15% more. In addition, several private companies run comfortable European-style express buses along the major routes. Many routes are also served by minibuses, which only leave when full. In remote areas the only public transport is often a truck or pick-up.

Car & Motorcycle

Cars can be rented from international and Zambian-owned companies in Lusaka, Livingstone, Kitwe and Ndola, but renting is expensive. For example, **Voyagers/Imperial Car Rental** (www.voyagerszambia.com/imperialrates.htm) charges from US\$51 per day for the smallest vehicle, plus US\$0.38 per kilometre (less per day for longer rental periods). Other companies, such as **4x4 Hire Africa** (www.4x4hireafrica.com), rent old-school LandRover Discovery vehicles, fully decked out with everything you'd need for a trip to the bush, with prices starting at US\$120 per day, though hiring a private driver will cost US\$100 extra per day.

Most companies insist that drivers are at least 23 years old and have held a licence for at least five years; you can drive in Zambia using your driving licence from home as long as it's in English.

While most main stretches of sealed road are excellent, beware of the occasional pothole. Most gravel roads are pretty good, though they also suffer from potholes. It is best to travel by 4WD if using a private vehicle.

Tours

Tours and safaris around Zambia invariably focus on the national parks. Since many of these parks are hard to visit without a vehicle,

joining a tour might be your only option anyway. Most Zambian tour operators are based in Lusaka (p1058) and Siavonga (p1064), as well as Livingstone (p1067).

Train

The Tazara trains between Kapiri Mposhi and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania (see opposite) can also be used for travel to/from Northern Zambia. While the Lusaka–Kitwe service does stop at Kapiri Mposhi, the Lusaka–Kitwe and Tazara trains are not timed to connect with each other, and the domestic and international train terminals are 2km apart.

Zambia's only other railway services are the 'ordinary trains' between Lusaka and Kitwe, via Kapiri Mposhi and Ndola, and the 'express trains' between Lusaka and Livingstone. Refer to the relevant sections for schedules and costs.

CLASSES

On the 'express train' between Lusaka and Livingstone, a 'sleeper' is a compartment for two people; 1st class is a sleeper for four; 2nd (or 'standard') class is a sleeper for six; and 3rd class (economy) is a seat only. On the 'ordinary train' between Lusaka and Kitwe, 'standard' class – the only class – is also just a seat.